In conclusion, the member once again emphasised the need for controlling the cart traffic, particularly on the narrow and tortuous roads in the hilly tracts. To show the earnestness of the planters in the matter, they had themselves inaugurated a system whereby their estate cart-men were being registered and made to carry identifying marks so that they at least might be under control.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Mc Mullin, in the matter of tolls, I will draw your attention to the remarks I made yesterday.

In the matter of bullock-carts and motor vehicles, there are rules drawn up to regulate traffic on the road. It has been laid down that the motorist should make way round the bullock-cart and not expect the bullock-cart to make way for the motor car. You want some rules to be drawn up by means of which a motor driver may be able to take prompt and effective action against a bullock-cart driver who offends. I think we shall also have to consider and find out means as to how the bullock-cart driver can take prompt and effective action against the motor driver who offends. I think it is not so much the carts as the bulls straying on the roads that cause inconvenience in the Peermade roads. That at any rate is my experience. Our bullock-cart men more or less understand the rules of the road. But it is the men who come from the British Districts—I refer to the Tamilian drivers who come from Madura—who are incapable of understanding the rules of the road. The police will take measures to impress upon these people the observance of the rules of the road. For the rest, I would draw your attention to the rule which bids the motorist to give room to the cart drivers and get round as best as he can with due regard to the safety of the people.

As regards the numbering and licensing of bandies, that is an ideal we all like to see attained. But whether the Commissioner of Police can devise practical means of doing anything in the matter will soon engage his attention.

31. Registration of Bandies.

MR. S. N. URE (*Member, Mundakayam Planters' Association*) said that he was not going to waste the time of the Assembly as what he intended to represent had already been represented and a reply had been given.

32. Regulation of Traffic.

MR. V. JACOB OOMMAN (*Member, Trading Classes, Alleppey*) observed that the last few years had witnessed an abnormal increase in the number of motor vehicles. The increase in motor traffic had rendered travelling easy and rapid and had also improved the trade facilities in the State. There was no part of the State which was not accessible by motor car. But side by side with the advantages, there was the danger of frequent motor accidents and consequent loss of lives. A notable accident occurred near Neyyattinkara a few years ago resulting in the death of seven men. As a result of a memorial then submitted by the people, the Government appointed a Motor Bus Inspector with power to test and certify to the mechanical fitness and safety of motor vehicles. That post was subsequently abolished; and a Traffic Inspector whose duties were mainly confined to the regulation of traffic was appointed instead. Although the new arrangement ensured some measure of control over traffic irregularities such as overloading, overspeeding, etc., motor accidents had steadily been on the increase. It was, therefore, high time that a qualified motor engineer was appointed for the constant inspection and periodical testing of motor vehicles. The two Traffic Inspectors appointed by the Government were not enough. The appointment of a superior officer not below the rank of a District Superintendent of Police and with expert knowledge in motor mechanism was necessary.

To regulate the grant of licenses to drivers of motor vehicles, more stringent rules were required. There were many irresponsible and reckless young men among the drivers. An applicant for a driving license should, before being given a license, be asked to produce a certificate regarding his sobriety and good conduct from at least two respectable citizens and the Tahsildar-Magistrate of the taluk and also a medical

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certificate regarding his physical fitness. He should further be required to furnish a security of at least Rs. 300, which should be forfeited to the Government in cases of proved misconduct or malpractice on his part. The system of testing cars by private parties and Police officers possessing no knowledge of motor mechanism should be put a stop to and a responsible superior officer thoroughly acquainted with such mechanism should be entrusted with this work.

In regard to traffic arrangements and supervision, the Police Commissioner should extend the same attention to the mofussil as to the Trivandrum town.

The member made also certain suggestions for the immediate attention of the Government. The existing maximum speed limit for motor cars was too low, with the result that the rule on the subject was very often violated. In actual practice, the motor vehicles were driven at high speed but were stopped a few furlongs before the checking stations were reached. At the appointed time they reached the checking stations passing which they again drove at the old speed. This was due to the want of an adequate speed limit, which should be at least 18 miles an hour. In town limits, however, the speed should not exceed 10 miles an hour. Secondly, checking was done only in certain fixed stations. Surprise checkings were rare and inadequate. That was being taken advantage of by the drivers. Thirdly, the time kept at various stations was not uniform. That gave an advantage to the drivers sometimes and was a source of delay to the passengers at other times. The time kept at the several checking stations should therefore be regulated as efficiently as in the Postal Department. Fourthly, cars driven in opposite directions should stop temporarily when they met and then alone resume their course. That would avoid accidents due to collision. Fifthly, accidents generally took place at or near bends on the roads. The bends should therefore be made wider on roads used for motor traffic. Every bus should be equipped with a proper horn, a speedometer and at least one spare tyre. The drivers usually spoiled their speedometers with a view to drive recklessly and avoid being caught. Sixthly, every bus should have a copy of the rules regarding traffic regulation and it should be made available for perusal by *bona fide* passengers. The copy should also contain a request to the passengers to report any infringement of the rules to the nearest Police Station.

In conclusion, the member suggested that the regulation of boat traffic be also entrusted to the Police Department. Although, in normal times, the traffic rules were properly worked by the the canal authorities of the Public Works Department, on festive occasions, when there were large crowds of travelling public, the aid of the Police Department was indispensable. This was what he had actually seen during the last *Ashtami* festival at Vaikam. He therefore placed the suggestion for the kind consideration of the Government.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Oommen, will you kindly enlighten me just on one point? How many times did you register complaints in regard to the irregularities that came under your observation? Did you say you saw irregularities fifty times?

MEMBER: I have seen.

DEWAN: How many times did you register complaints with the police?

MEMBER: No, I did not do that.

DEWAN: In other words, you saw irregularities and did not report them.

This is a matter in which the travelling public could largely co-operate with the police. Here we have a responsible member of the Assembly stand up and for 15 minutes produce a long indictment against the motor traffic and he then blandly tells me that although he has seen innumerable irregularities, he did not make a single complaint to the police for the irregularities to be set right. I will leave it at that.

As regards drivers you would have us believe that they are very wily and villainous. My experience is that the servant's conduct generally reflects his master's attitude and if the drivers are uncontrolled, reckless, unqualified and given to all sorts of vice and villainy, I must ascribe it to some extent to the laxity and carelessness and the indifference of the motor bus owners. You suggest a stringent course

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of action to be taken by the police. It seems to me that if all your suggestions are carried out the luckless car driver will more or less be a ticket-of-leave man pursuing his career of villainy under police surveillance. The police have already taken up the question of imposing an effective mechanical checking and scrutiny of all motor vehicles plying for hire. Qualified officers have just been appointed and they will soon be on the road. And before the next Assembly meets you will not find such frequent occasion for irregularities to go unnoticed.

33. Traffic Regulation and Control.

MR. K. MUHAMMAD ALI (*Member, Nominated*) said that there was urgent necessity for introducing a more careful and effective supervision of motor vehicles which were increasing in large numbers day by day. Motor traffic was becoming more and more popular but it was regrettable that accidents too were on the increase. The Commissioner of Police was no doubt endeavouring to minimise the accidents; and the appointment of two Traffic Inspectors was admittedly a step in the right direction. But the Inspectors were competent only to control traffic by preventing overspeeding and overloading, which were being vigilantly watched and controlled. But accidents were more often the result of defective machinery than of overspeeding or overloading. That explained why accidents were generally caused to buses and not to private motor cars even though the latter were allowed a higher speed-limit. The private owner kept his car in good condition and engaged competent drivers to ensure personal safety, while the bus-owner was anxious to make as much profit as possible at the minimum cost. As a result, the buses were entrusted to irresponsible drivers. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary to ensure constant supervision and examination of the mechanical fitness and safety of the buses. When such examination was being conducted by the Motor Bus Inspector, accidents were fewer in number. The existing arrangement under which motor cars were subject to half-yearly inspection by officers of the Public Works Department and even private individuals was not satisfactory. The chief defect was that the officers testing the buses had no knowledge of motor mechanism. Secondly, once the bus was tested, the responsibility of the testing officer ceased for a period of six months after which alone he examined it again. In practice, some bus-owners fitted in good parts at the time of examination and removed them afterwards, a trick which could not be played if the buses were subject to constant examination. Further, a bus might get into disorder at any moment. A third defect was that, under the new arrangement, the testing officer got half the fee charged for testing a bus. Therefore, the larger the number of buses checked, the greater his fee. The examination would inevitably therefore be less strict because the officer's aim would be to test as many buses as he could during a limited time. The above defects could be avoided if a full-time qualified Motor Engineer be appointed; and the member urged on the Government the need for employing such an officer, to work directly under the orders of the Commissioner of Police.

As regards the grant of licenses to motor drivers, the member was at one with the proposals made by the previous speaker. He repeated also two other suggestions made by the previous speaker, *viz.*, the widening of sharp bends on the roads and the increase of speed-limits of motor buses to 16 miles an hour in highways and a reasonably slower speed within municipal limits.

The member then referred to the irregularity prevalent in the Kottayam-Mundakayam lorries. Passengers were taken on the tops of goods carried in the lorries and were subject to the tender mercies of the weather. That was also a source of danger especially when the passengers were on the top of a big load. If the passenger was not vigilant, he was sure to be knocked down by overhanging branches of trees or by telegraph wires. Some time ago, some kerosene oil tins carried on a lorry caught fire and a passenger seeing the flames jumped out and died on the spot. It was absolutely necessary to put a stop to the practice of carrying passengers on the top of goods.

Passing on to the question of boat traffic, the member said that the boat-owners were circumventing the rules regarding capacity for accommodating passengers in the several classes. Under the rules, 6 square feet of area should be

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